



A LINE IN THE SAND



Comisiwn Ffiniau
Llywodraeth Leol
i Gymru

Local Government
Boundary Commission
for Wales



Hywel Merdydd Davies, Paul Wood (Chairman), and John Bader

Welcome to the first Newsletter produced by the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales.

Over the last few months, we have held events in different parts of the country aimed at finding out what issues concern those people with whom the Commission works. One of the areas identified for improve-

ment was communication and I hope that the regular publication of a Newsletter will go some way to addressing this.

For the next couple of years, the main focus of the Commission will be on Electoral Reviews of each of the Unitary Authorities in Wales. Amongst other things, we

will be making recommendations on the number of councillors in each Authority, the electoral divisions they will represent and how those divisions will be represented, i.e. by a single councillor or a number of councillors. An important aspect of the process will be to ensure that, as far as practicable, a citizen's vote is of the same value wherever he or she lives in a County or County Borough. This means we will examine very closely any situation where, within a single Authority area, there is a wide variation in the number of electors represented by councillors.

I hope you find the Newsletter informative and useful; please let us know what you think. After all, communication is a two way process.

Paul Wood QPM, BA, MSc
Chairman,

Volume 1, Issue 1

February 2009

Special points of interest:

..#Electoral Review given the go-ahead

..#First Counties to be reviewed are announced

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Annual General Open Meeting in Llandudno



Our very successful Annual General Open Meeting (AGOM) was held in Llandudno on 16th October 2008 with an attendance of 55 people in total.

The format was a little different than in previous years, with discussion of various topics covering communication, elector to Councillor ratios, what

makes for better boundaries and "what we do well..." or "...what we can do better."

The Annual Report was delivered to those who attended and additional copies were distributed to all those who requested one. A facilitator then led the way through the discussion material with

each table discussing two topics out of the four on offer.

The discussions were in some parts detailed, some enlightening and all were interesting. We tried to ensure that a Commission representative was at each table, that everyone had their voice heard and that their input was recorded. The facilitator then continued with a roundup of the main points raised, before everyone had the chance to circulate and see everyone else's views.

To finish off that process everyone then had the opportunity to vote for three issues they thought to be most important. These points were taken forward and analysed by the Commission staff to give an idea as to just what we would

The St George's Hotel Llandudno was the setting for the Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales' 2008 Annual General Open Meeting - the first in a series of well-received workshops.

need to address.

We decided on the format change to make the event more interactive. From the feedback received, it seemed to have been a hit. Our aim is to be open and helpful, and the new format was the start of a new era.

This newsletter is one direct result of the feedback from the AGOM, as we promised to be more accessible with our communication. We

listened to what you suggested and we made a change. This is the first of what we hope will be good things to come.

The main outcomes and suggestions from the questions discussed in the AGOM will be available in the next newsletter. We will also have some answers and further information on how we intend to take your suggestions forward.

The positive reaction from

everyone attending was encouraging. From that initial reaction we decided that we needed to take this to the rest of the Principality. With that in mind, two further workshops in West and South East Wales were arranged to continue the good work that started in Llandudno.

To those who attended, thank you for your input. For those that couldn't make it, we hope to see you next time.

Abbie Prescott-Bird
Review Officer, LGBCW

“... we were overwhelmed by the support of all our stakeholders at the AGOM...”

Taking things forward

As the format of the AGOM in Llandudno was such a success, we decided to carry forward the good work and organised two additional workshops at Coleg Gwent's The Hill campus, in Abergavenny, and Trinity College, Carmarthen.

The workshops followed much the same structure as the AGOM with the same discussion topics. As we were interested in capturing the widest audience, we were pleased that the two extra workshops attracted a further 91 participants.

In addition to the discussion topics, the facilitator also encouraged participants to capture any additional issues that fell outside the set discussion. These points were then placed on 'The Wall' for all to see and add to (see photo). We are looking into those issues raised at both events and we will report back with any information or developments in the next newsletter.

After addressing all the issues raised by you in the events,



the next step is to plan the next round of workshops. For this we would like your help - what would you like to be discussed at the 2009 workshops? What burning issues do you think need to be talked about? Let us know. We will take all suggestions seriously.

Abbie Prescott-Bird,
LGBCW

Talking to The Wall proved to be popular at the 2008 Workshops...

About the LGBCW...

The Local Government Boundary Commission for Wales is a surprisingly small and compact organisation.

The Commission itself consists of three appointed members who are supported by only three permanent members of staff – the rest of the five-strong Review Teams and their three admin staff are seconded from other Welsh Assembly and Government Departments on a variety of fixed terms as required to cover the Electoral Reviews as well as any ongoing Community Reviews.

The Commission are delighted to be able to contact it's stakeholders via this newsletter and very much intend it to be an interactive process. Indeed, now that the Minister has started the Electoral Reviews that is more important than ever whether it's now or in our Cross-Wales Meetings next Autumn. All our contact details are shown in the side panel and I'd like to take this opportunity to remind readers that we need to make sure we have your correct contact details. Please take a few minutes to ensure that your County websites carry the proper contact addresses and numbers for you and your organisation then please, please pass on any changes in those details as soon as possible. This will help us to help you.



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CONTACT US!

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